

window. Whether this bar was introduced for the purpose of strengthening the mullions, or for the sake of proportion, it speedily grew into frequent use. At the same time also vertical lines presented themselves occasionally in the tracery; a new principle, in fact, had made its appearance, which rapidly overran not only the windows and their tracery, but the doorways, the arcades, and every part of the building. The straight line, when once introduced, quickly superseded the curved line; square panels covered the walls, angularity of form pervaded even the mouldings and minor details, and the round finish, the square edge was preferred. This was the last of the four periods of Gothic architecture.

I. Saison Perpetuelle	1000	1000
II. Normans	1000	1000
III. Transitional	1150	1150
IV. Lancet	1150	1150
V. Geometric	1150	1150
VI. Curvilinear	1150	1150
VII. Perpendicular	1150	1150

It is time now that we should turn our attention to Furness Abbey. Before, however, describing its present remains, it will be necessary that I should first describe to you what the usual buildings of a conventual establishment were, and more particularly those of the order to which the abbey belongs, namely, the Cistercian order. It is not unnatural to suppose that, differing as the several monastic orders did in their habits, rules, and modes of life, some indications of these differences should find their way into the architecture of their buildings. It is many years since my attention was first directed to what appeared to be the peculiarities in the architecture of the churches of the Cistercian order of monks, and having subsequently had opportunities of visiting a considerable number of the abbeys of that order both abroad and in England, I was enabled to come to the conclusion that a uniformity in the design of the buildings of that order prevailed throughout Europe, which, if it was not the result of positive regulations, was, to say the least of it, very remarkable and worthy of record. As the value of any such discovery would appear to be materially enhanced by the further discovery of any documentary or historical evidence bearing upon the point, I spared no pains in obtaining access to the early chronicles and records of the Cistercian order. In the course of this enquiry, rendered less easy from the difficulty of meeting with any of the authentic histories of the order in this country, I ascertained the important fact, that the rules which were drawn up by the early Cistercian abbots in the infancy of their order, and which were enlarged and confirmed at subsequent but still early periods, containing directions relating not only to the discipline and mode of life to be followed within the walls, but also to the choice of site, and to the architecture and form of their buildings, as well as to the degree and nature of their ornament and internal decoration. As the whole of these directions are borne out and confirmed by all the examples with which I am acquainted,—as there appears, indeed, to be scarcely a single case in which a variation from these rules occurred within the first two centuries of the existence of the order,—I conceive that so interesting a fact, established as it would appear to be by the concurrent testimony afforded by the internal evidence of the buildings themselves, and the external evidence of contemporaneous historical record, and unnoticed as I believe it hitherto to have been, is worthy of particular mention and illustration. This is not the time and place for entering into the proof of what I have asserted; but as Furness Abbey corresponds in many of these particulars with all the other large abbeys of this order, I will mention a few of them. And, first, as regards the site of a Cistercian abbey: it was ordained that they should never be built in towns, or even in hamlets, but in secluded valleys, remote from the haunts of men. All who remember any of our principal Cistercian abbeys will notice how truly this rule is complied with,—they generally lie high up the valley, often in the narrowest part; and they appear to have usually cleared out the bottom of the valley for pasturage and cultivation, leaving the sides clothed with wood. Any one who has approached this abbey from Dalton, must have noticed how truly Cistercian

this approach is. I need scarcely mention Pountains, Rievaulx, and Tintern in support of this rule, which is most stringently complied with in France and Germany; and although in England situations of this kind would be in some parts difficult to meet with, yet I know of no instance in which the rule has been departed from, or the valley deserted for the high land.—(Monasticon Cisterciense, p. 246, gen. chap., A.D. 1134, Cap. I.) Next as regards the church. They prohibited every thing that had a vaunting ambitious character. Thus towers, which abounded in the abbey churches of the Benedictines, were eschewed by the Cistercians. They permitted, indeed, a low tower at the intersection of the arms of the cross, or over the crossing, as it was called, rising one stage only above the building, but nowhere else; and the tower we now see at the west end of Furness Abbey Church stands like that at the end of the north transept of Pountains, a monument of the degeneracy, so to speak, of the order, and an example of their departure in the sixteenth century from the rules they had laid down and observed in the twelfth and thirteenth. The churches were invariably dedicated to the Virgin Mary, and to her alone. They were nearly all uniform in plan, built without exception in the form of the cross, having a nave with side aisles, north and south transepts, and choir, and having also three small chapels, forming a sort of eastern aisle to the transepts, but separated from one another commonly by a partition wall.

I now come to a very important point of their regulations: they permitted no sculptures of figures, or of the human form, no images, no carvings save that of the crucifix, no pictures, no gold ornaments, no stained glass, that is to say, of a pictorial character, and no prostration in their churches. Now, although the period in which these rules were strictly carried out was possibly short, yet there is not one of their churches of early date upon which great severity of treatment is not plainly stamped: for example, I have searched in vain for such sculptures as are here prohibited in many of the Cistercian churches of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, whilst contemporaneous buildings of Benedictine origin abound with such carvings. Take, for example, the nearly contemporaneous buildings of Rievaulx and Whitby, situated within thirty miles of one another: in the one you will find grotesque figures, heads, and the utmost profusion of carved ornaments; in the other, extreme simplicity in these respects, numerous elegant mouldings, but no sculptures, no heads, no figures. So also in the church of Furness Abbey, you will find an almost entire absence of sculptured ornament, and the effect made dependent upon excellent proportion and purity of design, along with great varieties of detail. So far as regards the church, the conventual buildings were laid out with the same regularity and uniformity: of these the principal were,—1. The Chapter House, where all the business of the convent was transacted. 2. The Common Refectory and Day-room of the Monks. 3. The Kitchen. 4. The Principal Refectory. 5. The Hospitium, or Guest House. These were the most important buildings of a Cistercian monastery. There were others of less importance which I shall notice by and by; but these were always disposed round the quadrangle of the cloister in certain fixed situations, and we always know where to look for them in a ruined convent. The Chapter House point always adjoined the south transept of the church, a small apartment used as a sacristy alone intervening: it was usually the building most ornamented next the church. Next the Chapter House came a passage leading from the cloisters, and offices at the back. Next the passage came the Common Refectory, or Day-room of the Monks, a building generally of more plain character than the rest, and which extended beyond the length of the cloister to some distance, according to the number of inmates. Now, you will perhaps think that I have been describing the actual remains of Furness Abbey; the truth being that I have been describing upon the plan of what actually remains at Furness, the conventual arrangement of almost all the Cistercian abbeys with which I am acquainted. In fact, the plan

of Furness is the exact counterpart of a plan which I made of the Cistercian abbey of Brombach, on the Maine, in Franconia. I will now point out which parts are still in actual existence at Furness Abbey, and which have been restored according to the approved model; and in doing so I will at the same time state their style and probable date, referring each portion to its proper period. And first in point of importance, as well as of date, comes the conventual church. The convent having been founded in the year of our Lord 1129, some time usually and naturally elapsed before the proper steps could be taken, the designs matured, and the funds collected for commencing a work of this kind; indeed, in most cases, these preliminary preparations appear to have consumed almost as much time as the building of the church itself. Judging from the style of the work, I should be disposed to say, that the church could not have been commenced before 1160. It belongs therefore to the earlier part of the Transitional period, and seems to have been entirely completed according to the original design. I have already stated, that in the earlier part of this period a remarkable rule was uniformly observed in the discrimination exercised in the use of the two forms of arch, the circular and the pointed. Here we have an excellent example of the observance of this rule, although the building was erected close upon the time when the use of the two forms of arches became indiscriminate. In this church, however, the whole of the arches of construction are pointed, and the whole of the arches of decoration are circular. There is another feature which strongly marks the exact date of this building, the use of a peculiar capital, entirely confined to this period: it consists, as usual, of a square block hollowed down to the circular shaft, the bell or neck of which is inclosed in a plain leaf, having a curled end at each corner of the capital resembling a volute. The mouldings have precisely that profile we are accustomed to look for in works of this precise date; and the same may be said of the form of the piers, which are alternately cylindrical in groups of eight. The choir is the only part of the building that has been materially altered; for although the invention of windows of the Rectilinear period in many parts of the remains has to an inexperienced eye greatly affected the apparent character and style of the building, yet the practised archaeologist will readily recognise these interpolations. In the choir, however, a great change was made in the fifteenth century, the extreme end being taken down, and the building extended considerably towards the east: this work, which includes an originally fine east window, now gone, two lofty side windows, and some elaborate and beautiful sedilia, belongs entirely to the Rectilinear period. Passing now into the south transept, we first recognise the accustomed flight of stairs which led from the dormitory of the monks to the church, which they made use of at their different hours of service during the night, and ascending these we shall find ourselves close to the scriptorium or library, over the Chapter House; and advancing still further, we shall find ourselves in the dormitory—that is, we should have done, had there been a floor, which there is not: we must therefore be content to restore the vaulting of the common refectory, on which that floor rested, in imagination, and descend at once into the cloister quadrangle. We first come to the Chapter House, which we approach through a fine vestibule, having a circular archway for its entrance, on each side of which are two similar circular arches, one opening to the sacristy, and the other to a vaulted apartment very commonly found in this situation, and which, till we find a better destination for it, we will call a penitential cell, which I believe is what it was. The Chapter House and vestibule belong to the very best time of the Lancet period, and are very elegant specimens of this work. We next come to the common refectory and dormitory over it, which are plainer examples of the same period: still adhering to the cloister quadrangle, and leaving the remains at the end of the common refectory (at subsequent examination, we must turn to complete our survey of the quadrangle of this once magnificent series of buildings, with little else left us but speculation and regret. From what we have seen of the size and character of